two of the demands related to increase in the procurement price of sugarcane and payment of arrears.

(b) The Central Government fixes, under the Sugarcane (Control) Order, 1966, the statutory minimum price of sugarcane payable by sugar factories. For 1986-87 and 1987-88 seasons, the minimum prices respectively are Rs. 17.00 and Rs. 18.00 per quintal, linked to 8.5 per cent recovery. These are not procurement prices. They are the floor prices below which no sugar factory can pay. In actual practice, the growers have been getting prices much higher than the statutory minimum. For example, the growers in Uttar Pradesh are getting a price of Rs. 24 to Rs. 25 per quintal, in Bihar Rs. 24 to Rs. 24.50 per quintal, in Punjab Rs. 24 to Rs. 27 per quintal, in Haryana Rs. 24 to Rs. 28 per quintal, in Karnataka Rs. 22.50 to Rs. 29.00 per quintal. As regards clearance of arrears, it is primarily the responsibility of the State Governments who have the necessary powers and field organizations to enforce the same. The Central Government has been requesting the State Governments from time to time to take steps for having the payments cleared expeditiously.

For the 1985-86 seasons, only Rs. 4.9 crores remained to be cleared as on 15-1-1987 out of the total cane price of about Rs. 1640 crores.

**Import of white cement by Nafed**

1203. SHRI RAMSINGHBHAI PATALIYABHAI RATHVAKOLI: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that NAFED had imported white cement during 1984-85; if so, what was the quantity and at what rate;

(b) what are the items that NAFED generally import;

(c) whether white cement is one of the above items which NAFED usally import and how many times NAFED had imported white cement;

(d) whether NAFED is not importing this item regularly, if so, the provision under which NAFED had imported this item; and

(e) how much profit or loss NAFED made on this transaction?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI G.S. DHILLON): (a) NAFED imported 2,500 tonnes of white cement during 1984-85 policy period at the rate of US $135.50 per tonne (C&F Bombay).

(b) NAFED imports a variety of items such as Nutmeg, Mace, Pulses, dry fruits, cloves, fresh fruit, harevest combines & tractors's spare parts, ball-bearing, PVC resins, etc.

(c) NAFED has so far imported white cement in 1984-85 only.

(d) NAFED as a recognised Export House was issued an additional licence for import in 1983-84 as an incentive against exports; and it imported white cement under the scheme.

(e) Pending settlement of a dispute involving sales transactions, the accounts relating to the import of white cement have not been finalised.

**Public complaints under new Consumers' Protection Act**

1204. SHRI RAM AWADHESH SINGH:
SHRI TALARI MANOHAR:

Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a revolutionary new Consumers' Protection Act for goods and services has come into effect as reported in the 'Hindustan Times' of the 1st February, 1987; and

(b) whether it is also a fact that Five Magisterial inquiries covering public complaints and losses due to failure of goods and services are pending in Delhi alone and if so, what corrective steps have been proposed in this regard under the above Act?